

Claim 4 (original): A flexible ladder according to claim 1 wherein the flexible vertical member is selected from the group consisting of a rope, nylon cord, a strap, a cable, a chain and a length of flexible material.

Claim 5 (currently amended): A flexible ladder according to claim 4 4 wherein the horizontal support platform is a wooden dowel and the vertical member is a length of rope.

Claim 6 (currently amended) A flexible ladder climbing apparatus for a playground comprising at least three ropes and a plurality of platform steps held in position on the ropes by a thermoplastic sleeve that is heat shrunk around the rope.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): A method of assembling a flexible ladder, said method comprising sequentially threading a flexible vertical member through a bore in a step and then a heat-shrinkable tubular sleeve until a desired ladder length is achieved and then applying heat to shrink the sleeve thereby preventing the step from moving on the rope in response to downward pressure.

#### **R E M A R K S**

The applicant affirms that a provisional election was made with traverse to prosecute the invention of group 1 as defined in claims 1 to 6 and claim 7 has therefore been withdrawn from consideration at this time. We retain the right to pursue the subject matter in a divisional application.

The examiner rejected claims 1, 3 and 4 as being anticipated by Heilskov '708. Claim 1 submitted herewith has been amended to include the limitations of former claims 2 and 3 and to specify that the support platform is a rigid platform that is prevented from slipping down by a heat-shrinkable stop member. It is submitted that Heilskov '708 does not teach a stop member of heat-shrinkable